

The Chairman and Members of the

St. Germans District Council.

Gentlemen,

It is again my duty to submit to you my Annual Report as to the health and sanitary condition of the district during the past twelve months.

The district has an area of 4171½ acres, and the population on the census of 1891 was 15080, on which all the

ANNUAL REPORT

During the year 1897 the number of births registered in the whole district was --- of the --- per thousand as against 419 births in 1896 with a rate of 27.7 per thousand.

Medical Officer of Health.

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The total number of deaths from all causes was 307 which gives a rate of 15.7 per thousand as against 308 deaths in the preceding year.

St. Germans District Council.

Thirty-eight of these were among children under one year of age, which gives a death rate of 8.5 per thousand, being a slight increase on the year preceding.

Ninety-three were at the age of sixty-five and upwards showing a considerable increase in the number of deaths among aged people. Of these, 26 occurred between the ages of seventy-five and eighty, 56 between eighty and ninety and 4 over ninety.

Only 6 deaths were recorded as being due to syphilitic diseases, making the death rate for these causes .33 per thousand showing a marked decrease on the preceding year.

To

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St. Germans District Council.

Gentlemen,

It is again my duty to submit to you my Annual Report as to the health and sanitary condition of the district during the past twelve months.

The district has an area of 41712 acres, and the population on the census of 1891 was 15080, on which all the statistical tables are drawn up.

During the year 1897 the number of births registered in the whole district was 335, making a birth rate of 22.2 per thousand as against 419 births in 1896 with a rate of 27.7 per thousand.

The total number of deaths from all causes was 207 which gives a rate of 13.7 per thousand as against 208 deaths in the preceding year with the same rate per thousand.

Thirty eight of these were among children under one year of age, which gives a death rate of 2.5 per thousand, being a slight decrease on the year preceding.

Ninety three were at the age of sixty five and upwards shewing a considerable increase in the number of deaths among aged people. Of these, 26 occurred between the ages of seventy five and eighty, 34 between eighty and ninety and 4 over ninety.

Only 5 deaths were recorded as being due to zymotic diseases, making the death rate from these causes .33 per thousand shewing a marked decrease on the preceding year,

when they numbered 18 giving a rate of 1.1 per thousand.

Of these 1 was from diphtheria

1 from measles

2 ,, diarrhoea.

Eleven deaths were due to cancer, being a decrease of seven on the preceding year, and giving a rate of .72 per thousand.

Thirty five cases of infectious diseases were notified during the year, viz:-

9 from diphtheria

8 ,, scarlet fever.

1 ,, typhoid fever.

1 ,, puerperal fever.

16 ,, erysipelas.

being a decrease of 23 on the number notified in 1896, and 81 on those in 1895; giving a rate on this year's cases of 2.3 per thousand.

Three hundred children have been successfully vaccinated during the year, nineteen only of those over six months old being returned as unvaccinated.

In the St. Germans division 50 births were registered and 41 deaths giving a birth rate of 17.3 and a death rate of 14.2 per thousand respectively as against 21.2 and 11.4 in 1896.

Of these only 2 deaths occurred under one year old, making the death rate .69 per thousand, and 20 were at the age of sixty five and upwards. 9 of these were between seventy five and eighty, and 7 at the age of eighty and upwards.

One death was due to zymotic disease, viz:- Diphtheria, making a death rate of .34 per thousand.

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There were 9 cases of infectious diseases notified as against 25 in 1896, viz:-

1 from Diphtheria,
2 ,, Scarlet fever,
6 ,, Erysipelas,

making a rate of 3.12 per thousand.

The two cases of scarlet fever occurred in the second and fourth week in May at Craithole and Sheviack, and as far as I could ascertain were unconnected one with the other, the former being imported from a neighbouring district and the origin of the other could not be satisfactorily traced.

The case of diphtheria which occurred in one of two cottages under the same roof was probably the result of a defective drain close outside the door, the child affected being delicate and much out of health at the time, and though several other children were in the same cottages, the disease did not spread.

There was an epidemic of whooping cough in the neighbourhood of Diviack during October, when from forty five to fifty cases occurred on account of which I considered it necessary to close the National School at Diviack for five weeks.

A foul cesspool at Clinick gate which was the cause of illness was at once attended to and drained to a safe distance from the house on application to the owner of the property.

The supply of water for two cottages at Treginnis is inadequate, consisting of a small pool by the road side unprotected from cattle or the flow of surface water.

This should receive the immediate attention of the authority and a well sunk properly protected and supplied with a pump.

The occupiers of the cottages at Minard Cross "five in number" obtain their supply of water from a well at Minard which is about 375 yards distance. This is, I consider, not within a reasonable distance, and I recommend that a proper supply be provided for them.

The drainage from the yard occupied by Mr. Bersey at Craft-hole still at times flows out into the gutter on the south side of the highway, causing a nuisance to the adjacent houses. This should be remedied, and I should advise that the drainage from the yard and the slaughter house adjoining be carried into a loose cesspit in a field on the south west of the village away from any dwellings.

In the North side of Polbathick there is still an insufficient supply of water which should receive the attention of the authority before another summer.

The drainage of Tideford village should be completed without delay and a more equal distribution of the water supply for the village.

There is still a pressing necessity for more closet accommodation for some of the cottages in the district.

Two outbreaks of anthrax amongst cattle at Bake Barton were notified to me during the year.

In the South division 205 births were registered, giving a birth rate of 25.07 per thousand and 106 deaths giving a rate of 12.9 per thousand as against 14.4 in 1895 and 16.02 in 1896.

Of these 24 were under one year of age, making the death-rate 2.9 per thousand, the causes of death being 6 from bronchitis and pneumonitis, 3 from premature birth, 2 from convulsions, 1 from measles, 2 from peritonitis, 6 from defective vitality, 3 from diarrhoea, and 1 from tuberculosis.

Forth five were at the age of 65 and upwards, of these 11 were between the ages of seventy five and eighty, 15 from eighty to ninety and 4 at ninety and upwards. Four deaths were recorded as being due to zymotic diseases, viz:-

3 from diarrhoea,

1 ,, measles,

making the death from these causes .48 per thousand as against 1.3 in the year preceding.

There were 20 cases of infectious diseases notified as against 27 in 1896, viz:-

6 from Scarlet fever,

3 from Diphtheria,

1 from Typhoid fever,

1 from puerperal fever,

9 from erysipelas,

shewing the disease rate from these causes to be 2.4 per thousand.

Of these the case of puerperal fever occurred at Millbrook on account of which the room and bedding were carefully disinfected and the nurse prohibited from attending other cases for eight weeks.

The six cases of scarlet fever were all isolated cases, totally unconnected one with another, the origin being difficult to determine occurring in different localities and at different periods, viz., one in February at Antony Village, one in March at Cawsand, the remaining four at Torpoint in May, August, and December, and although these occurred in tenement houses with other families, the precautions taken prevented any spread of the disease.

Two of the cases of diphtheria occurred at Wilcove, one a child in May, the other a youth in June, who worked in the

Dockyard at Devonport. The other in May in an isolated house at St. Johns, the surroundings of which were clean and free from any kind of nuisance - and in neither of these places was there any spread of the disease.

The case of typhoid fever was an isolated one occurring at Kingsand in June. The house is not in a good sanitary condition, a suitable water closet being required. The landlord's attention has been called to the present condition and the necessary requirements

During the summer and autumn an engine was again required to pump water from the stream below into the storage reservoir to provide a sufficient supply of water for the inhabitants of Torpoint.

In November I found that a barge load of town soil had been landed at a quay behind Navy Terrace and though carted straight away from the vessel it was in contravention of the order prohibiting its being landed in Torpoint.

The drainage of number 15 Fore Street and other houses on the same side of the street is in an unsatisfactory condition. The owners of the property should be compelled to provide efficient drainage for their houses.

The water closets at the Union House with the exception of the one in the Lying-in ward are still in a very insanitary condition.

The burial ground for the parish being almost full, the urgency for a fresh burial ground is more pressing than ever. No time should therefore be lost in providing one.

At Antony the school closets remain in a most insanitary state. Steps to remedy this should be taken without further delay, that the school may be in a healthy condition before another summer.

The school house has no closet accommodation of any sort; neither has the house occupied by a family named Spry.

Water closets should be substituted for the existing pail

for the house occupied by Mr. Collins, and for the privy for the house occupied by Mr. May.

An efficient ventilating shaft has been fixed at the head of the village sewer. And I would recommend the continuance of the sewer for the four houses on the south side of the road below the Post Office.

The three houses on the south side of the hill occupied by Messrs. Newton Robjohns and Binney have at present two privies in a very dilapidated condition. These should be replaced by water closets connected with the sewer.

At St. Johns there are two houses owned by Mr. Parsons, the closet and drains of which require to be placed in good repair; and the house on the other side of the road occupied by Mr. Benjamin Webber has no closet accommodation nearer than eighty yards, which is an excessive distance.

The closet at Trelay Farm is much too near the house, and ought to be removed to a safer distance.

Millbrook has been for the past year almost entirely free from any infectious disease, but there are still some sanitary defects. Two houses in Newport then owned by Mr. Ford, one containing four rooms occupied by six old people, the other also with four rooms occupied by one family are without any accommodation for depositing slop water, etc., and the privy is at the top of the garden very small and in a very dirty condition.

There are also five houses on the quay belonging to various owners without any closets and all the slop water etc. is emptied on to the mud.

Three houses at Millpool head are still unconnected with the sewer. The owners should be urged to make the necessary connections at once.

In April my attention was called to the drainage of Priesthood Terrace. Bucket closets were used, the emptying of which was complained of as being a nuisance. The liquid sewage was drained into a cesspit in the garden within thirty feet of the public sewer in Blindwell Hill. As the closets were scarcely within the prescribed distance from the sewer, the District Council consented to supply the pipes for the connection of the closets to the sewer and converting them into Water Closets.

In June I advised that water closets be provided for 90 and 91 West Street which has since been carried into effect.

Complaints were made during the summer with regard to the number of pigs kept in the village, most of which were either slaughtered or removed.

At South Down there are nine houses occupied by fifteen families dependent for the supply of water on a small well 3 ft. x 1½ ft. and 15 inches deep situated 150 yards from the nearest and 250 from the farthest house. The water main from Millbrook runs within 70 yards. It would therefore be advisable for arrangements to be made to carry the water from the main for their supply.

In January a large number of letters were washed ashore at Kingsand which were presumed to have been from the Royal Mail Steamer "Nubia", which had cases of cholera on board, but on investigation there was no reliable evidence that such was the case, and they were mostly burnt on the beach without any ill effect.

In February I conferred with the Captain of the Royal Engineers and Medical Officer in charge at Maker with reference to the position of the catch-pit that received all the liquid drainage from the barrack urinals, etc. It was simply a

loose-built tank, ten feet deep and eight feet in diameter, allowing the sewage to soak into the land, situated within fifty yards of the collecting ground, and within three hundred yards of the reservoir supplying water to Kingsand. I recommended that the sewage tank should be removed to below the source of water supply and that the sewage should be conveyed to it in pipes. This recommendation was to be forwarded to the Military Authorities, but up to this date as far as I am aware without any result.

In March the sewer was extended to the top of the village and a suitable ventilating shaft and flushing tank fixed at the head. A drain running under the Inn at the bottom of the village should be diverted from underneath the house along the passage way on the outside as in its present position it is injurious to health.

Slops of various kinds are still thrown on the beach opposite the houses on the Cleave. Some means should be adopted to prevent such a source of nuisance.

Some houses in Cawsand have during the year been supplied with water closets, yet there are still many without any such accommodation.

The public urinal etc. should be cleaned daily.

I strongly advise that all the gutters should be curbed and channelled similar to Fore Street, Kingsand, which has proved so satisfactory.

In the North division 80 births were registered, and 60 deaths, making the birth rate 19.8 and the death rate 14.9 per thousand as against 28.3 and 10.9 per thousand respectively in 1896.

Of these, 12 were under one year of age, viz:- 3 from premature birth, 1 from carbuncle, 2 from debility, 2 from

bronchitis, 1 from enteritis, and 3 inquests shewing the death rate among children under one year old to be 2.9 per thousand.

Twenty eight were at the age of sixty five and upwards six of these being between seventy five and eighty, and twelve between eighty and ninety years of age.

No deaths from zymotic diseases were registered during the year.

There were six cases of infectious diseases notified, viz:-

5 from diphtheria

1 ,, erysipelas.

One of the cases of diphtheria was a Police Constable at St. Mellion who had been on duty in various parts of the County; consequently it was impossible to trace the cause. And four were in a house at Horsepool, the surroundings of which were damp.

There was no connection between these cases and the one at St. Mellion, although they all occurred in June.

In St. Mellion Village there are fifteen houses with a population of 80 dependent for the supply of water on four dipping wells and three pumps, and during a dry summer they have not an adequate supply. The drainage of the village demands the attention of the Authority.

In Cargreen there are four houses without suitable closet accommodation, the owners of which should be communicated with on the subject and also be requested to fix a pump to the well which supplies two of these houses.

The drain from the premises occupied by Mr. R. Braund is discharged on the side of the road close outside a house facing the river, thereby causing a nuisance. I saw the owner and urged upon him the necessity of extending the drain

to the river which he will I hope carry into effect without delay.

The well supplying a large portion of Carkeel Village should be properly protected and have a pump fixed.

In February I inspected a house at Antony Passage, which I found in such a wet state that I advised the tenant to remove which he at once did, and the house has not since been occupied.

The drain from the row of houses facing the river has been extended.

In October a Local Government Board Inquiry was held at St. Stephens respecting the drainage and water supply of Burraton and other portions of St. Stephens parish which should be carried out with as little delay as possible, the cesspits now in use being so full causing a serious nuisance and there is great difficulty in remedying it. Lower Burraton ought also to be included in the scheme, as in that portion of the village the sanitary arrangements are at present most unsatisfactory.

At Cross Park, St. Stephens, the closets from seven houses drain into a small pit of quite inadequate size. There being also two other houses, and more to be built, I recommend the Authority to extend the sewer from the end of Russell Terrace in order that these houses may be drained into it.

In Landrake the houses occupied by Messrs. R. Doney, W. Scandlebury and R. Foreman and Mr. Rogers' slaughter house should be drained into the sewer.

There is a roadside drain opposite Mr. Philip Panter's that should be removed as at times it is a serious nuisance.

At Pillaton the gutter in the field behind the long row of houses requires to be cut deeper to make a greater fall for

carrying off slop water, etc.

In Quethiock Village the four alms rooms are without any closet accommodation and a shed at the back in which a donkey is kept is too near the dwelling and ought to be removed. The Trustees of the charity should be communicated with on the subject and urged to carry out the necessary work.

The closet of the house occupied by Mr. Harris is unfit for use, and should be removed and the trench behind the house opened up.

At Trehunest there is insufficient closet accommodation for the number of inhabitants. At Blunts the drain on the roadside opposite the houses is frequently stagnant, soapy water being thrown into it. This requires attention. During dry summers there is a scarcity of water in the Village.

The remaining portions of my district do not at present require special notice.

Six samples of water have been subjected to analysis, three being sent to the County Analyst, and three I have analysed, all being pronounced to be good or fairly good, and fit for domestic use.

The landing of Town soil at the various quays in the district was prohibited during the summer months, as in previous years. Various notices have been served for the abatement of nuisances which were attended to forthwith.

Throughout my district I find the question of overcrowding a most difficult one for though the cottages in many cases are inadequate with regard to the number and size of the rooms for large families, ventilation during the day time is generally attended to, and as a rule the labouring classes would be unable to pay a higher rental for more accommodation. I do not, therefore, see how we can enforce the law where lodgers are not taken in.

It is advisable that occupiers of houses even in small villages should be prohibited from keeping pigs in large numbers excepting it be at a specified distance from any dwellings or public thoroughfares where they are likely to become a nuisance.

It is most desirable that all slaughter houses should be paved with flags or cement and that all garbage, etc. should be at once removed to at least 100 yards distance from any dwellings or highways.

On my recommendation leaflets containing extracts from the Bye-laws were printed for general distribution throughout the district.

I must again draw your attention to the anomaly of the Bye-laws not dealing with nuisances in the parish of Landulph, and only dealing with slaughter houses in the parishes of Maker and Landrake with St. Erney and that in the clauses relating to the removal of house refuse the contributory place of Caw-sand is excluded, I hope the Authority will see fit to revise these defects during the coming year.

In conclusion, I consider it most satisfactory to note the marked decrease in the number of cases of infectious diseases notified during the year, and of the low death rate from these causes more especially with regard to Typhoid and Scarlet fever from neither of which was any death registered which is ample evidence of the improved sanitary condition of the district.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. BEDFORD KERSWILL,

Medical Officer of Health.

St. Germans,

January, 1898.

